

Message Text

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SUBJECT: "OPERATION SHOESTRING" -- MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY'S SECOND
VISIT. FEB 25 - MARCH 6, 1975

1. THE MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY'S SECOND VISIT TO DOMINICAN REPUBLIC FROM FEB 25 TO MARCH 6 WAS EVEN MORE SUCCESSFUL THAN LAST YEAR'S (MARCH 10-21, 1974) VISIT. THIS CULTURAL UNDERTAKING WAS, LIKE LAST YEAR, A JOINT PROJECT CARRIED OUT BY COMBINING RESOURCES OF GODR, FUNDING BY PRIVATE DOMINICAN AND FOREIGN CORPORATIONS OR ASSOCIATIONS, WITH COORDINATION AND FACILITATIVE ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY US MISSION.

2. THE MILWAUKEE WAS "MOBILE" THIS YEAR AND MOVED AROUND COUNTRY THANKS TO FALCONBRIDGE DOMINICANA'S DONATION OF \$38,000 ACOUSTICAL SHELL-ON-WHEELS TO NATIONAL THEATER. ORCHESTRA TOUR BEGAN FEBRUARY 26 WITH FREE "POPS" CONCERT IN SANTIAGO DE LOS CABALLEROS, ON AMPLE GROUNDS OF CITY HALL WITH ATTENDANCE OF SOME 3,000. ON FEB 27, DOMINICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY, THE MILWAUKEE PLAYED TO TOWN/COMPANY AUDIENCE OF 3,000 IN BONAO, OVERGROWN VILLAGE HOUSING FALCONBRIDGE FERRONICKEL OPERATION. PARENTHETICALLY, ALL "POPS" CONCERTS ENDED WITH STIRRING RENDITION OF "1812 OVERTURE" COMPLETE WITH CANNONS, A REALISTIC TOUCH APPEALING TO DOMINICAN PSYCHE. HOWEVER, AFTER SANTIAGO DEBUT OF CANNONS (WHICH SHOWERED MUSICIANS AND SCORES WITH LIVE SPARKS) THESE SOUND EFFECTS WERE PLANTED AT MORE DECOROUS DISTANCE FOR SUBSEQUENT POPS CONCERTS.

3. THE MILWAUKEE'S FIRST NATIONAL THEATER APPEARANCE PLAYED
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TO ANEAR SELL-OUT CROWD OF 1,300 ON FRIDAY, FEB 28. THE

PERFORMANCE FEATURED SOPRANO CAROL NEBLETT, ONE OF US'S MOST PROMISING OPERA STARS, AND WIFE OF MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY CONDUCTOR KENNETH SCHERMERHORN. FOLLOWING CONCERT, A RECEPTION AT EMBASSY RESIDENCE GAVE SOME 300 DOMINICAN GUESTS, RANGING FROM MUSICIANS TO THE VICE PRESIDENT AND CABINET MEMBERS, AND OPPORTUNITY TO MEET THE MILWAUKEE GROUP.

4. THE BENEFIT CONCERT FOR CENTRO DE REHABILITACION, GIVEN MARCH 1, WAS NOT AS WELL ATTENDED. SOME 900 PEOPLE HEARD 16-YEAR-OLD KAREN ELEY, A VIOLIN PRODIGY WHO WAS VERY WELL-RECEIVED DURING 1974 CONCERT SESSION WHEN SHE PERFORMED WITH DOMINICAN NATIONAL SYMPHONY UNDER GUEST CONDUCTOR JAMES DEPRIEST. THERE WERE TWO REASONS FOR RELATIVELY SMALL ATTENDANCE: 1) THE HIGH PRICE OF THE TICKETS (\$10-25 COMPARED TO REST OF CONCERT SERIES); AND 2) THE LIMITED NUMBER OF DOMINICANS ABLE TO AFFORD FAITHFUL ATTENDANCE AT THREE-WEEK-LONG MUSIC FESTIVAL.

5. ON MARCH 2, A "POPS" CONCERT WAS GIVEN IN THE SANTO DOMINICO PALACIO DE DEPORTES. AS OPPOSED TO LAST YEAR'S CONCERT (ATTENDED BY APPROXIMATELY 10,000 PEOPLE), THIS YEAR'S CONCERT DREW AN AUDIENCE OF APPROXIMATELY 3,000, DUE IN PART TO LAST-MINUTE CHANGES OF VENUE AND HOUR. THE CONCERT WAS WELL-RECEIVED, WITH PEOPLE IN THE AUDIENCE ACCOMPANYING THE ORCHESTRA, SOMETIMES TO CONSTERNATION OF CONDUCTOR SCHERMERHORN.

6. ON MARCH 4, A CONCERT FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WAS GIVEN AT NATIONAL THEATER. FOLLOWING THE CONCERT, THE SYMPHONY WENT TO THE LA ROMANA RESORT AREA FOR A RAINY DAY OF REST, FOLLOWED BY AN EVENING "POPS" CONCERT, HELD IN THE LA ROMANA BASEBALL STADIUM (4,000-5,000 PEOPLE).

7. THE FINAL CONCERT OF THE TOUR WAS MARCH 5, WITH PIANIST JOHN COVELLI AS SOLOIST (APPROXIMATELY 1,300 IN ATTENDANCE).

8. THE GENERAL RECEPTION OF THE MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY WAS AT LEAST AS FAVORABLE AS THE RECEPTION IT RECEIVED LAST YEAR. ALTHOUGH THE CROWDS AT INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATIONS WERE SMALLER, THE ORCHESTRA WAS IN-COUNTRY LONGER AND A LARGER OVERALL AUDIENCE IN THE CAPITAL AND AT THREE INTERIOR SITES ATTENDED THE CONCERTS. THE MEMBERS OF THE MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY EXPRESSED THEIR PLEASURE IN RETURNING TO UNCLASSIFIED

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THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AND WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ANOTHER ENGAGEMENT.

9. PROGRAMS, PHOTOS, AND A SELECTION OF PRESS CLIPPINGS ON MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY VISIT WILL BE FORWARDED SEPARATELY. HURWICH

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